

Village of Ardentown

Ardentown, Del. 19810

Established 1922

Incorporated 1975

The regular meeting of the Village of Ardentown was convened at 7:30pm on Monday, November 10, 2014. Enno Krebbers, Chair, presiding. A quorum was present.

IN ATTENDANCE:

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. June Kleban | 13. Suzanne Winkler | 24. Holly Custer |
| 2. Joan Fitzgerald | MacGuire | 25. Ben Gruswitz |
| 3. Betty Ann Themal | 14. Enno Krebbers | 26. Shari Phalan |
| 4. Harry Themal | 15. Joy Mulholland | 27. Shelley Robyn |
| 5. Tara Kelly | 16. Dotty Verne | 28. Terri Hansen |
| 6. Mike Fish | 17. Maureen Gordon | 29. Sue Cherrin |
| 7. Alison Wakelin | 18. Annie Gutsche | 30. Elaine Schmerling |
| 8. Hetty E. Francke | 19. Oliver Gutsche | 31. Anne P Lutz |
| 9. Hans Francke | 20. Steve Cohen | 32. Steven Curley |
| 10. Hardy Hoegger | 21. Peter Slattery | 33. Steven Threefoot, |
| 11. Rusty Hoegger | 22. Cassandra Lewis | guest |
| 12. Sandy Landerl | Slattery | 34. Bill Theis, guest |
| | 23. Hugh Phibbs | |

MEETING: Regular meeting called to order at 7:30 pm by Enno Krebbers, Town Chair. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes for the February meeting were approved with no changes.

SPECIAL GUEST: Kiki Evans, constituent liaison for Bryon Short's office attended the meeting and encouraged residents to ask any questions they may have about state level issues. Several residents raised concern about the safety for pedestrians and children waiting at the bus stop at the intersection of Sconset and Harvey Road. It is a blind turn from Harvey on to Sconset and there is no safe walkway on that side of Sconset, even though the crosswalk is at the top of the hill. Can something be done? She will check and see if DelDOT has had any other complaints and can do something to address the safety concerns.

REGISTRATION- Betty Ann Themal reporting:

NEW LEASEHOLDS:

Lot 157- 2309 Loreley Lane David Burslem and Theresa Truono 10/10/14

NEW RESIDENTS:

Heather LaCorte and Eric Weiss- 2309 Loreley Lane

Carly Hampton- 2305 Brae Road

Tara Kelly and Mike Fish- 1505 Harvey Road, first floor

Jeanine Pollard and Scott Fackler 1505 Harvey Road, second floor

Jonathan Favors and Brianna Moore- 1707 Harvey Road

PREVIOUSLY UNREPORTED NEW RESIDENTS:

Althea Noronha- 2311 Brae Road
Rose Carey- 2316 Orchard Road
Johanna Rucker- 2316 Orchard Road
Mary Margavage and Tom Bowser- 2301 Sconset Road
Heather Moran- 2303 Sconset Road

TREASURER'S REPORT- Terri Hansen reporting for Barbara Mondzelewski:

Operating Accounts:	\$41,517.20
Municipal Street Aid	\$10,762.68
<u>Arden Building and Loan</u>	<u>\$22,134.88</u>
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	\$74,414.76

MEMORIAL GARDEN- Rusty Hoegger reporting: All action items reported on at the September Meeting have now been accomplished with the hope that the work will last for many years to come.

PLANNING COMMITTEE- Elaine Schmerling reporting for Drew Hansen: Elaine has been working with DNREC for several months and now has 2 bids submitted for grants. There was so little interest in grants for this season that the deadline for applications was shifted to April, which will delay potential funding and work. Ben Gruswitz will call Bryon Short's constituent liaison in the hopes of getting some help from his office for this. Hetty Francke wonders if another Eagle Scout could be approached to do the job. Unfortunately, the plans recommended from DNREC are quite complicated and involved due to safety issues so a licensed, bonded and insured contractor is needed.

PUBLIC WORKS:

Roads – Joan Warburton-Phibbs: A list was started of areas needing attention. Bruce Downing was contacted to see what the latest in the year is that work can be performed. An estimate was given to us for possible speed bumps to be installed at Loreley Ln and Millers Rd. The estimate was \$3,775. The town will try to see if money can be received from elsewhere as this is a safety/hazard issue.

Signs – Sue Mearkle / Cheryl Regan: 17 signs have been received and are in the process of being stained and the reflective bead applied. Weather permitting; installation may begin when they are completed.

Snow/sand – Paul Romagano: The snow plowing contract has been received. The snow barrels are in the process of being ordered.

Street Trees - Elaine Schmerling: **Urban & Community Forestry Tree Management Grant:** We are using \$4,166 and splitting the work with Ron-low bidder for removing dead elms at the bottom right of Brae – and Kerns – low bidder for the rest (dead elms bottom left of Brae, 2 dead trees and pruning up others on Petit Green). Ron hopes to begin this week.

We are required to plant at least the number that we are cutting down (15), and Harry said the Trustees can pay for this, so I propose planting 22 trees, 4 shrubs, in various areas (I have a draft plan, under \$500, need to check with the nurseries for exact price and numbers).

ASH PROBLEM: Letter from DE Dept. of Agriculture – Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is destroying ALL ash trees, and is within 15 miles away. They say we can expect ALL ash trees to die 6-10 years from now with no measures taken. They recommend we: 1) survey ash trees, 2) pick valuable ones to treat (i.e., large ones we want to keep – in the short term is less expensive than cutting down) – and 3) plan to take out smaller ash trees/ones not worth keeping.

Elaine S. has not found ash street trees in Ardentown. They were widely planted in cities as street trees, but luckily we seem to have missed this trend. She may have missed some before the leaves fell. Elaine S. **proposes that we all survey ash trees on OUR leaseholds, and we can get a group-rate for ash treatment.** The time for treatment is in April. Contact Elaine if you want to be part of this (each leaseholder would pay for the treatments on their leaseholds). Should be under \$100/tree (exact amount depends upon tree size), will need to be done every year.

How many ashes do we have in the woods? The '03 botanical survey in the Arden woods found 6 ash – green and white, out of 224 trees and shrubs, to make 3%. So it is a tragedy, but may not affect us in the Ardens as much as it will devastate trees in the cities.

Compost Area:

Hal says it will be turned next week. First two bins are ready to accept leaves. Take it over on a tarp, all the way back. Reminder to put leaves out for yard waste collection.

Ivy League Alex planted peach trees along edges in the wooded area to the left of The Candlelight. There have been 2 “Ivy league parties” to clear invasive bush honeysuckle there, to allow more light to the peach AND pawpaw trees we had planted back in '04. We are getting a paw paw patch! Other trees are doing well. Clearing up area some, would be great to put labels on trees and have people be able to see them....need time and more volunteers!

PLAYGROUND – Stephen Curley reporting: Stephen is open to hearing any suggestions for the playground.

BUZZ WARE VILLAGE CENTER- Terri Hansen, representative reporting: Terri Hansen read a report she had prepared and took questions at the end of that report:

When I first joined the Buzz Ware Village Center Committee a number of years ago I went with the idea that I was representing Ardentown and our land rent money and assisting in the effort to manage and provide stewardship for the Buzz. For many years this is how I and other Ardentown and Ardencroft representatives were treated. The Committee was a team of folks from all three Ardens, and while those from Ardentown and Ardencroft did not have “official votes” all business was conducted together and by consensus.

In 2013, the official elected committee members asserted that the only “real” committee members were those elected from Arden and that those of us from Ardentown or Ardencroft were simply volunteers. As a part of this shift, we were no longer asked to give a vote in decisions, and we were closed from Executive Sessions, which became more regularly used. The monies from Ardentown and Ardencroft, which had been called contributions, began to be called gifts.

As the atmosphere continued to decline the three Town Chairs reached out to Ted Rosenthal in the hopes of mediating a more conciliatory way forward. This process has taken all of the year and resulted in a validation of the legality of the changes made by the Arden Buzz Ware Village Center

Committee. The legal documents show there is no way for the three Villages to share in the management and supervision of the building or the Renovation Fund, which is used to fund capital improvements of the building, unless all three Towns agree upon something and pass that agreement with a vote in all three Town Meetings.

Repeatedly the Ardentown and Ardencroft representatives have been told that only Arden has a fiduciary responsibility and stake in the operation and management of the Buzz. I feel that this is not the case. For many years we have contributed financially with our land rent to pay the bills at the Buzz. Our representatives and residents have given of their time and talent to assist in management, operations, and events. We have created, coordinated, and assisted with many fundraisers for the Buzz, sometimes with little or no help from Arden residents. Through a budgeting fluke, there were two years when the Buzz rentals paid all the operating expenses and the money we and Ardencroft contributed to the Buzz was reabsorbed into the Arden Village coffers.

Today, the Village of Ardentown's contribution, along with the Trust's, is designated to go to the Buzz Renovation Fund, which is managed the Buzz Ware Village Center Committee. Only those elected to serve from the Village of Arden can vote on how and when it is spent. This money is meant to be used to make capital improvements to the Building. Regular maintenance, utilities and salaries are paid for from the operating budget which, ideally, is covered by rentals. With this in mind, is it fiduciarily responsible for us as an independent municipality to give our land rent to capitally improve the property of another independent municipality? I do not believe it is prudent or appropriate to do so.

My recommendation, as your appointed representative to the Buzz Ware Village Center Committee is as follows:

1. As a Village, we should not continue to contribute land rent monies to the Renovation Fund, and instead encourage all Ardentown residents to make individual contributions to this Fund when they attend community events at the Buzz such as the Coffeehouse, Art on the Town, or the New Year's Brunch.
2. We should see the Buzz as an organization more along the lines of ACRA, the Craft Shop Museum, and the Arden Page and not a physical location.
3. We should continue to support the Buzz, not as a physical location, but in its mission to serve as a place where community events happen. To do this I would propose that the Village give a \$300 "designated gift" to the Buzz to be used to defray the material costs of events like those named above. By giving money to buy decorations, food and drink for events that all residents of all Ardens benefit from we will be focusing our efforts and our land rent far more appropriately.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR:

Alison Wakelin- Won't decreasing the amount of our contribution adversely affect participants of programs like community events and meetings? ANSWER- No, the current monies do not go toward support of public programs, but rather to the capital improvements on the building like windows, doors, lighting, painting, etc. By designating the money to be used for material expenses related to community events we will actually help them increase offerings, since right now there is no line item specifically related to community event expenses.

June Kleban- Can't we find a way to get a vote? ANSWER- No. All three villages are bound by the law and the law is simply that non-residents may not vote on a Town Committee. Arden residents cannot vote on Ardentown business anymore that Ardentown residents can vote on Arden business. As long as the building remains the legal property of the Village of Arden, only Arden residents elected to the

BWVC Committee have a legal right to vote. This can only be changed by agreement by all three Village Meetings and votes from all three Village Meetings.

Hetty Francke- Commented on the history of the 3 Ardens involvement with the BWVC being built with assessments (funding) from Arden and Ardentown. Arden bought the building from the local School Board for \$1, couldn't Ardentown and Ardencroft not each contribute 33 cents?? Asked about availability of meeting minutes in the interest of openness. ANSWER- Minutes for the BWVC meetings are currently being taken by Liz Resko and are available on the BWVC web site shortly after the meetings are completed. They are publicly available there. If you do not have access to a computer, or prefer to receive them directly, you can always reach out to Steven Threefoot, chair of the BWVC Committee for a copy of minutes.

Steven Threefoot, Chair of BWVC Committee addressing the meeting as a guest- Steven Threefoot wants to reassure Ardentown residents that access and availability of the BWVC is not reliant on a village contribution to the BWVC. All community events are open to all residents of all three Ardens, free of charge. If a community group would like to hold an event or meeting in the building that does not charge a fee and is open to all members of the community, space will be available at the Buzz. Residents of all three Ardens receive a 10% discount on rentals. Wants Ardentown to consider the attribute of free space and open space represented by the Buzz and how that benefits all the Ardens. This must be as cost neutral to Arden as possible. There are costs associated with the building that don't show up in the BWVC budget but must be born by the Village of Arden.

TRUSTEES REPORT: Harry Themal reporting: Nothing to report.

TOWN CHAIR REPORT: No report

ELECTIONS:

Treasurer- Barbara Mondzelewski retired after 27 years of service. The community thanked her for her many years of dedicated service. Holly Custer stood for election. No nominations from the floor. Holly Custer was elected with a unanimous vote.

Town Chair- Enno Krebbers retired after 5 years of service as Town Chair and many more years in a variety of other roles. He thanked the town for the opportunity to serve the community, and the Coordinating Committees, Town Officers, and Trustees for all of their help. Harry Themal, speaking for the residents and leaseholders of Ardentown, thanked Enno for his many years of service and dedication to our community. A move was made for a standing ovation, which passed with enthusiasm. Annie Gutsche agreed to stand for Town Chair, no nominations from the floor. Annie Gutsche was elected with a unanimous vote.

Community Planning- Andrew Hansen was unanimously re-elected to serve as head of the Planning Committee. Gil Johnston has retired. Mike Fish volunteered to serve as a member of the Planning Committee. No other nominations or volunteers from the floor. Mike Fish was elected to the committee with a unanimous vote.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm